

**CLAIMS IN "CLEAN" FORM**

- 1    1.    A release control method for providing early deployment releases of a software  
2        system, the early deployment releases containing support for new features and  
3        platforms, the method comprising the steps of:
  - 4        a.    providing an early development branch of the software system that is  
5            designated for incorporation of one or more software modules providing  
6            support for new features and platforms;
  - 7        b.    receiving, from a plurality of integration units, a plurality of pre-tested  
8            software modules, wherein each of the pre-tested software modules  
9            comprises one or more new features or supports one or more new  
10        platforms;
  - 11       c.    committing the pre-tested software modules for new features and  
12            platforms into the early development branch; and
  - 13       d.    using the early development branch, generating a new early development  
14            release containing pre-tested [source code] software modules for new  
15            features and platforms.
- 1    2.    The release control method of claim 1 comprising the additional step of repeating  
2        steps c and d on a regular recurring basis for a fixed number of cycles.
- 1    3.    The release control method of claim 1 wherein the pre-tested software module is  
2        received at a pre-integration branch that is separate from the early development  
3        branch, and wherein the committing step comprises committing pre-tested  
4        software modules for new features and platforms from a pre-integration branch  
5        into the early development branch.
- 1    8.    A system for providing early deployment releases of a software system, the early  
2        deployment releases containing support for new features and platforms,  
3        comprising:

- 4           a.       an early development branch of the software system designated for  
5                   incorporation of one or more software modules providing support for new  
6                   features and platforms;
- 7           b.       logic for receiving, from a plurality of integration units, a plurality of pre-  
8                   tested software modules, wherein each of the pre-tested software modules  
9                   comprises one or more new features or supports one or more new  
10                  platforms;
- 11          c.       logic for committing the pre-tested software modules for new features and  
12                   platforms into the early development branch;
- 13          d.       using the early development branch, logic for generating a new early  
14                   development release containing pre-tested software modules for new  
15                   features or platforms on a regular recurring basis for a fixed number of  
16                   cycles; and
- 17          e.       logic for generating said new early development release containing pre-  
18                   tested software modules for new features or platforms on a regular  
19                   recurring basis for a fixed number of cycles.

1    9.       (Amended) The system of claim 8 wherein the logic for committing comprises  
2                   logic for committing pre-tested software modules for new features and platforms  
3                   from a pre-integration branch into the early development branch.

1    14.      (Amended) A product release method for controlling the release of software  
2                   system code based on a fixed frequency, the method comprising the steps of:  
3              a.       selecting one or more features for inclusion in a new release of the  
4                   software system code base, wherein a quantity of features selected will allow a  
5                   next scheduled release of the software system code base to be completed at a  
6                   required time;

7              b.       testing the quantity of features selected in a plurality of business units;

8              c.       providing the quantity of features selected to a pre-integration branch of  
9                   the software system code base only when testing in the business units is  
10                  successful;

- 11           d.       testing the quantity of features selected in the pre-integration branch;
- 12           e.       providing the quantity of features selected to a development branch only
- 13           when testing in the business units is successful and in time to allow the next
- 14           scheduled release of the software system code base to be completed in the
- 15           required time.

- 1   15.   (Unamended) The method of claim 14 comprising the additional steps of:
- 2           a.       completing testing of a modified software system code base in the
- 3           development branch which contains the quantity of features selected and
- 4           tested in the pre-integration branch; and
- 5           b.       releasing the modified software system code base at the required time.

- 1   19.   A method as recited in Claim 1, further comprising the steps of:
- 2           receiving and testing a plurality of software source code modules that support new
- 3           features or platforms at a respective plurality of business unit pre-
- 4           integration branches;
- 5           committing one or more of the plurality of software source code modules from the
- 6           one or more of the business unit pre-integration branches to a central pre-
- 7           integration branch only when such testing is successful; and
- 8           committing the plurality of software source code modules from the central pre-
- 9           integration branch to the early development branch when all the modules
- 10          have been committed from the business unit pre-integration branches to
- 11          the central pre-integration branches.

- 1   20.   A method as recited in Claim 19, further comprising the step of generating, using
- 2           the early development branch, a new early development release containing pre-
- 3           tested source code for new features and platforms only when the plurality of
- 4           software source code modules has been committed from the central pre-
- 5           integration branch to the early development branch.

1 21. A method as recited in Claim 1, further comprising the steps of:  
2 receiving a plurality of software source code modules that support new features or  
3 platforms at a respective plurality of business unit pre-integration  
4 branches;  
5 at each business unit, testing each feature of the software source code modules of  
6 that business unit individually, in combination with each other feature  
7 individually, and in combination with all other features;  
8 committing one or more of the plurality of software source code modules from the  
9 one or more of the business unit pre-integration branches to a central pre-  
10 integration branch only when such testing is successful; and  
11 committing the plurality of software source code modules from the central pre-  
12 integration branch to the early development branch when all the modules  
13 have been committed from the business unit pre-integration branches to  
14 the central pre-integration branches.

1 22. A method as recited in Claim 19, further comprising the step of generating, using  
2 the early development branch, a new early development release containing pre-  
3 tested source code for new features and platforms only when the plurality of  
4 software source code modules has been committed from the central pre-  
5 integration branch to the early development branch.

1 23. A computer-readable medium comprising one or more stored sequences of  
2 instructions for providing release control using early deployment releases of a  
3 software system, the early deployment releases containing support for new  
4 features and platforms, which instructions, when executed by one or more  
5 processors, cause the one or more processors to perform the steps of:  
6 a. providing an early development branch of a software release that is  
7 designated for incorporation of support for new features and platforms;  
8 b. receiving, from a plurality of integration units, a plurality of pre-tested  
9 source code modules, wherein each of the pre-tested source code modules

- 10 comprises one or more new features or supports one or more new  
11 platforms;  
12 c. committing the pre-tested source code for new features and platforms into  
13 the early development branch; and  
14 d. using the early development branch, generating a new early development  
15 release containing pre-tested source code for new features and platforms.

- 1 24. A computer-readable medium as recited in Claim 23, further comprising the steps  
2 of:  
3 receiving and testing a plurality of software source code modules that support new  
4 features or platforms at a respective plurality of business unit pre-  
5 integration branches;  
6 committing one or more of the plurality of software source code modules from the  
7 one or more of the business unit pre-integration branches to a central pre-  
8 integration branch only when such testing is successful; and  
9 committing the plurality of software source code modules from the central pre-  
10 integration branch to the early development branch when all the modules  
11 have been committed from the business unit pre-integration branches to  
12 the central pre-integration branches.

- 1 25. A computer-readable medium as recited in Claim 24, further comprising the step  
2 of generating, using the early development branch, a new early development  
3 release containing pre-tested source code for new features and platforms only  
4 when the plurality of software source code modules has been committed from the  
5 central pre-integration branch to the early development branch.

- 1 26. A computer-readable medium as recited in Claim 23, further comprising the steps  
2 of:  
3 receiving a plurality of software source code modules that support new features or  
4 platforms at a respective plurality of business unit pre-integration  
5 branches;

6 at each business unit, testing each feature of the software source code modules of  
7 that business unit individually, in combination with each other feature  
8 individually, and in combination with all other features;  
9 committing one or more of the plurality of software source code modules from the  
10 one or more of the business unit pre-integration branches to a central pre-  
11 integration branch only when such testing is successful; and  
12 committing the plurality of software source code modules from the central pre-  
13 integration branch to the early development branch when all the modules  
14 have been committed from the business unit pre-integration branches to  
15 the central pre-integration branches.

1 27. A computer-readable medium as recited in Claim 24, further comprising the step  
2 of generating, using the early development branch, a new early development  
3 release containing pre-tested source code for new features and platforms only  
4 when the plurality of software source code modules has been committed from the  
5 central pre-integration branch to the early development branch.

1 28. A system as recited in Claim 8, further comprising the steps of:  
2 receiving and testing a plurality of software source code modules that support new  
3 features or platforms at a respective plurality of business unit pre-  
4 integration branches;  
5 committing one or more of the plurality of software source code modules from the  
6 one or more of the business unit pre-integration branches to a central pre-  
7 integration branch only when such testing is successful; and  
8 committing the plurality of software source code modules from the central pre-  
9 integration branch to the early development branch when all the modules  
10 have been committed from the business unit pre-integration branches to  
11 the central pre-integration branches.

1 29. A system as recited in Claim 28, further comprising the step of generating, using  
2 the early development branch, a new early development release containing pre-

3 tested source code for new features and platforms only when the plurality of  
4 software source code modules has been committed from the central pre-  
5 integration branch to the early development branch.

1 30. A system as recited in Claim 8, further comprising the steps of:  
2 receiving a plurality of software source code modules that support new features or  
3 platforms at a respective plurality of business unit pre-integration  
4 branches;  
5 at each business unit, testing each feature of the software source code modules of  
6 that business unit individually, in combination with each other feature  
7 individually, and in combination with all other features;  
8 committing one or more of the plurality of software source code modules from the  
9 one or more of the business unit pre-integration branches to a central pre-  
10 integration branch only when such testing is successful; and  
11 committing the plurality of software source code modules from the central pre-  
12 integration branch to the early development branch when all the modules  
13 have been committed from the business unit pre-integration branches to  
14 the central pre-integration branches.

1 31. A system as recited in Claim 8, further comprising the step of generating, using  
2 the early development branch, a new early development release containing pre-  
3 tested source code for new features and platforms only when the plurality of  
4 software source code modules has been committed from the central pre-  
5 integration branch to the early development branch.

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